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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
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LIVER AND HOW TO USE IT

Liver deserves the place of distinction it has attained in recent years in the family diet. Because of its function in manufacturing red blood cells, liver is an excellent food for everybody. It is especially valuable for children during all the years of growth, and for mothers during the period of pregnancy and of lactation; they may well have liver as their meat dish once a week. Convalescents who have necessarily been on a restricted food intake during a serious illness may need liver to help build up depleted red blood cells. Liver in some form is an important item in diets to prevent or to cure some types of anemia.

Liver is a rich source of iron and other substances necessary in the formation of red blood cells. It is also valuable for several vitamins needed for general well-being at all ages and for the prevention of certain deficiency diseases. In vitamins A and G and the pellagra-preventing factor, liver is exceptionally rich; it also contains vitamins B, C, and D. Like other lean meats, liver is an excellent protein food.

When the price of calves' liver makes it a luxury, beef, pork, and lamb liver may be used. These are less expensive, and for building red blood cells are practically as valuable as calves' liver. Now that chicken giblets may be purchased separately by the pound in many markets, these small livers may be served to all of the family occasionally or to those persons who are especially in need of such valuable building food.

Liver has a very delicate flavor if it is properly prepared. Many persons form a prejudice against it or fail to appreciate its flavor because it has been poorly cooked. Liver may be very easily overdone by cooking it a little too long or by using a temperature slightly too high.

There are many delicious ways to prepare liver other than to saute and broil it. These quick methods of cooking are especially desirable for lamb and calves' liver or for tender, fresh beef liver, all of which should be cooked only long enough to take away the red color. Pork, or other liver with a less delicate flavor and texture, tastes better if par-boiled and then braised or baked. Made into a loaf with rice, into a salad with cucumbers and celery, or prepared as a scalloped or creamed dish, liver may be a novelty to the family. Chopped or ground liver may be broiled, or added to soup.

Liver has a place in the school lunch box as well as on the family dinner table, because it makes excellent fillings for sandwiches. Left-over broiled or pan-cooked liver may be sliced thin or chopped and used as a sandwich filling just as any other cold meat is used, with butter, salad dressing, or a mild relish. A recipe for a smooth sandwich spread called Liver Paste and other recipes for preparing liver are found in Miscellaneous Publication 216, "Meat dishes at low cost." Suggestions for the use of liver in the child's diet are found on pages 16 and 17 of Farmers' Bulletin 1674, "Food for children."

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